



MOUNTAINSTAR

Timpanogos Regional Hospital

A Message from Timpanogos Regional Hospital:

The leadership team at Timpanogos Regional Hospital thanks the Utah Department of Health for their foresight regarding the need for transparency of healthcare costs and quality outcomes. Their efforts are appreciated.

We would like to comment on one particular finding regarding hip fractures. According to the report, deaths for hip fracture patients at Timpanogos Regional Hospital are higher than state averages and higher than the data would expect based on the medical complexity of the patients we care for. Timpanogos had 12 more deaths than expected over the three year period which the report covered.

We have processes in place at Timpanogos to evaluate these kinds of outcomes and constantly ask what we can do to improve. Sometimes we find things we can do better at the hospital and sometimes we find interpretation problems with the measurement system.

In our review of all the hip fracture deaths at our hospital over the reported time period, it was discovered that four patients had formal DNR (do not resuscitate) orders and six had comfort care orders (not a formal DNR but requested by the patient or family not to perform life-prolonging activities). An additional three patients had life-support withdrawn after they were initially placed on a ventilator (some through the emergency room) and family later made the decision to withdraw life support.

One issue related to these patients that the State's hip fracture data does not address is a hospital's ability to discharge a patient to a nursing home or transitional care unit once the patient or family has made a decision not to pursue further aggressive medical interventions. Circumstances in Utah County are such that beds in nursing homes or transitional care units are difficult to find, especially for acute patients.

Other hospitals in Utah County have Transitional Care Units where they typically transfer these patients after a 3 to 4 day hospital stay. When a DNR patient is transferred to one of these units, the death is not recorded as a death in the hospital. Because Timpanogos does not have a Transitional Care Unit, we care for these patients and support their decision not to pursue life-prolonging care. We are honored to be able to care for these patients and their families through their entire course of care.

It's important to note that Timpanogos is one of the 70% of Utah hospitals with a death rate of 0% among hip replacement surgery patients over the three year period. We believe that this confirms our proven track record of our orthopedic doctors and nurses being able to provide excellent care to hip patients when the patient is in a position to undergo surgery.

Again, we thank the State and UDOH for their leadership and support them fully in making health care quality data available to the public.

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